

Cities and Statewide Afterschool Networks Partnering to Support Afterschool



National League of Cities



Institute for Youth, Education, and Families

The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) is a special entity within the National League of Cities (NLC).

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The YEF Institute helps municipal leaders take action on behalf of the children, youth, and families in their communities. NLC launched the YEF Institute in January 2000 in recognition of the unique and influential roles that mayors, city councilmembers, and other local leaders play in strengthening families and improving outcomes for children and youth.

Through the YEF Institute, municipal officials and other community leaders have direct access to a broad array of strategies and tools, including:

- Action kits that offer a menu of practical steps that officials can take to address key problems or challenges.
- Technical assistance projects in selected communities.
- Peer networks and learning communities focused on specific program areas.
- The National Summit on Your City's Families and other workshops, training sessions, and cross-site meetings.
- Targeted research and periodic surveys of local officials.
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Introduction

In cities and towns across America, millions of children and youth get out of school by mid-afternoon but have neither a safe, supervised place to go nor a structured or engaging activity in which to participate. Because the hours between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. are when young people are most likely to be affected by crime or to engage in risky behaviors, the lack of afterschool opportunities presents significant challenges to parents, community members, and city, state, and federal leaders. Many local elected officials also recognize the importance of providing young people with access to challenging, relevant, and enriching activities that address other city goals and priorities. Concerned about quality of life and the city's economic vitality, municipal leaders use afterschool programs to support academic achievement, improve public safety, help working parents become more productive, and combat childhood and youth obesity.

Expanding afterschool opportunities and creating a citywide system for afterschool may be challenging, but city leaders do not have to do this work alone. Across the country, municipal leaders in communities large and small are working with statewide afterschool networks to advance local afterschool efforts. These statewide afterschool networks, created in 38 states with the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, serve as vehicles to convene local and state policymakers and leaders in youth development, education, health, juvenile justice, business, and other fields who are interested in improving outcomes for children and youth. They also encourage policymakers to wisely invest additional resources to expand afterschool opportunities and address the quality and sustainability of programs.

When cities partner with their respective state networks, they benefit from joint planning efforts, the sharing of resources and best practices, and the formation of new partnerships that are necessary to strengthen local efforts and create comprehensive statewide afterschool policies. Statewide afterschool networks aim to ensure that high-quality afterschool programs are available across the state for all children and youth who need them. The networks understand that one way to meet this goal is to work with cities and towns to enhance programs, determine need, increase public awareness, and develop local leadership and capacity to promote afterschool.

WHY SHOULD MUNICIPAL LEADERS SUPPORT AFTERSCHOOL?

The availability and quality of afterschool programs are relevant for city leaders because of their contributions to many key city priorities and goals:

Safety: Afterschool programs keep children safe during the hours between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. when they are most at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime. Public safety is a top concern in every city and afterschool programs ensure that the streets are safer and young people are not left unsupervised.

Risky behaviors: Research shows that youth are most likely to engage in risky behaviors (drinking alcohol, smoking, using drugs, and engaging in sexual activity) in the afterschool hours. Because city leaders are concerned about the health and well-being of their communities' future parents, voters, and workers, they care about how young people use this time.

Academic achievement/economic development: Cities need an educated workforce to attract business and sustain economic development. Businesses spend millions of dollars each year to train employees on remedial skills. City leaders are concerned about the educational success of young people. Afterschool programs provide an opportunity for youth to enhance and apply their

academic skills. Through internships with the city or connections with employers, young people learn skills that strengthen the local labor force and prepare them for economic success.

Obesity: There is a growing concern about the health and wellness of young people. Twenty-three million children, or 32 percent, ages two to 19 are obese or overweight, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. Many cities have created walking trails and augmented recreational spaces for children and families to help them get the exercise they need. In addition, many afterschool programs now offer recreational or fitness opportunities, nutrition education, and a healthy snack. Participation in a structured program after school helps prevent young people from developing unhealthy eating habits and engaging in sedentary activities.

Worker productivity: Employers lose between \$500 and \$2,000 per employee per year due to high stress and low productivity after 3:00 p.m. when working parents' children leave school. Afterschool programs help parents focus on their jobs, knowing their children are safe until they get home.





Purpose of this strategy guide

Because state policies impact local efforts and vice versa, partnerships between municipal leaders and statewide afterschool networks can draw upon local knowledge to emphasize the importance of afterschool and strengthen both state and local afterschool initiatives. This strategy guide features examples of how cities and statewide networks are effectively working together on behalf of children and youth in individual communities and simultaneously using their collective powers to increase afterschool funding and improve policy decisions that affect young people across the state. This guide also provides a list of ideas for how cities can partner with their respective statewide afterschool networks to impact state policy, leverage resources, sustain programs at the state and city levels, receive guidance and training to improve program quality, generate state and national visibility, and expand access to high-quality programs.

Why should municipal leaders partner with statewide afterschool networks?

In many instances, the goals of cities and statewide afterschool networks are closely aligned. The leadership, expertise, political clout, and spheres of influence that municipal leaders and networks possess can drive system change for afterschool at both the local and state levels. State-level afterschool policy reforms and state funding increases benefit cities and towns by enabling them to increase access to or improve the quality of afterschool programs. Simultaneously, because municipal officials see firsthand the impact that afterschool programs have on children and families in their cities, they can help their state networks advocate for change. City officials often have unique expertise in operating and funding programs, supporting community providers, creating citywide systems for afterschool, and increasing public awareness and support. Partnerships between cities and statewide afterschool networks can advance their common goals in the following ways.

JOINT EFFORTS TO INCREASE STATE FUNDING AND SUPPORT

Many cities, towns, and school districts rely heavily on funds provided through the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to support existing afterschool programs and create new ones. Unfortunately, current funding levels are insufficient to support programs throughout the country that need these resources. As many local programs see their grants expire, their future sustainability is uncertain. Because of this shortage of federal and state resources, many municipalities are investing or reallocating city dollars to meet local needs. Municipal leaders have a vested interest in aligning their efforts with state-level attempts to increase funding that will help sustain programs over time. In recent years, supportive policy or funding changes that expand afterschool opportunities have occurred primarily at the state and local levels. Therefore, it is imperative for mayors and city councilmembers to be engaged in state-level discussions and debates on afterschool policy.

SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY

Beyond funding needs, local leaders are also concerned

EVOLUTION OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR AFTERSCHOOL

Dedicated federal funding for afterschool over the past decade has come from the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant program. Cities have been major recipients of this grant, which allocates just over \$1 billion to approximately 7,000 afterschool programs around the country. In 2002, a major shift occurred in the reauthorization of 21st CCLC as part of the No Child Left Behind Act, transferring the grant-making authority and management of federal afterschool dollars from the federal government to the states.

This policy shift generated momentum at the state level and provided a way for governors, legislatures, and state departments of education to recognize their state's afterschool needs and play an active role in expanding the resources available for afterschool programs. In response to this new policy environment, statewide afterschool networks were formed to impact state policies, partnerships, and funding for the development and sustainability of high-quality afterschool programs.



about the quality of afterschool programs. If a mayor or city council invests local funds in an afterschool program, they want to know that the program will achieve desired results for young people and the community. Partnering with statewide afterschool networks enables cities to access professional development, training, tools and research, and connections to other cities that can share best practices. Some cities are working with their networks to develop standards for afterschool programs, which ensure that all programs maintain a high level of quality. As networks collaborate with their state departments of education or state legislatures to create statewide afterschool quality standards that may be tied to funding incentives, local officials can ensure that their needs and concerns are addressed in these conversations.

HELP IN BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR AFTERSCHOOL

Local elected officials respond to the needs of their constituents and work to generate public support for the issues that they want to address. If a municipal leader embraces afterschool as a top priority or takes a stand on the issue, he or she will need buy-in from the public and key community leaders to be successful. To gain support, it is helpful to inform the public of the community's need for afterschool and the benefits that programs can have in terms of increasing young people's chances for success, reducing the stress faced by working parents, developing an educated workforce, and improving public safety. Highlighting data that demonstrate the number of children without access to programs can be a powerful way to show the public how large the gap is between needs and resources and how their support is vital to ensuring that young people have afterschool opportunities.

The statewide afterschool networks collect state-level data on afterschool and can help city leaders collect local data to make a stronger case to their constituents. This is especially useful if local elected officials are considering special tax levies or bonds that will require voter support. Having the data in hand to illustrate community needs also helps city leaders determine which neighborhoods need additional resources and programming. This data-based approach to targeting underserved areas demonstrates to the public that municipal leaders are responding to a specific need.

By gaining momentum from a statewide focus on afterschool, communities can get excited about being part of a larger movement to support young people. Statewide networks also help policymakers explain the connection between afterschool and issues such as graduation rates and workforce development. In addition, mayors and councilmembers can help support their networks by engaging their peers and colleagues in other cities in statewide efforts and building public will for afterschool in their cities and towns. When local elected officials use their bully pulpit to highlight the importance of afterschool, they can make a strong impact on statewide advocacy efforts, and municipal officials often have the power and influence to open doors at the State House.

A MECHANISM TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Several cities have formed new relationships with key state and local partners due to their participation in statewide afterschool networks. These connections have led to greater business and foundation involvement in local afterschool initiatives and stronger city-school partnerships. In some cases, city leaders overseeing local afterschool coalitions and state network staff have served on each other's boards. Several cities have also strengthened these partnerships by working with their state networks to sponsor Lights On Afterschool events that advance a strategic vision and plan for the development of a citywide afterschool system. These efforts not only facilitate the creation of strong local partnerships, but also improve cross-city relationships between local elected officials, key municipal staff, and other stakeholders.

Through joint efforts to increase or maintain afterschool funding and make state policies more flexible, improve the quality of afterschool programs, build public will, and strengthen local partnerships, municipal leaders and statewide afterschool networks can achieve important victories that benefit children and youth.



THE STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORKS

Established with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the statewide afterschool networks serve as a catalyst to promote afterschool at the state level. The networks actively engage key state and local decision-makers in supporting school-based and school-linked afterschool programs. As of 2009, 38 states have afterschool networks to coordinate state and local partners and influence afterschool policies. All networks engage their state departments of education, key partners that manage the federal 21st Century Community Learning Center grants. Some other critical partners include state departments of health or juvenile justice, governors' offices, and statewide advocacy organizations.

Statewide afterschool networks work to accomplish three main goals: 1) developing strong partnerships with leaders from state departments, statewide advocacy groups and associations, regional groups, cities, schools, and other key stakeholders to influence state afterschool policy; 2) securing additional state funding to sustain new and existing afterschool programs; and 3) ensuring programs are of high quality.

Since the creation of the first statewide networks in 2002, many states have witnessed a number of accomplishments including:

- Increased state funding for afterschool;
- Creation and improvement of city afterschool initiatives;
- Increased awareness among governors, mayors, and other key decision-makers about the impact of afterschool programs on student success;
- Engagement of afterschool champions to highlight the importance of afterschool among legislators, business executives, parents, and community leaders;
- Sponsorship of forums and summits to engage local and regional providers and supporters;

- Compilation and analysis of data to inform continuous improvement and policy development;
- Development of standards and principles for effective afterschool programs; and
- Provision of testimony and recommendations on issues of quality and sustainability.

The combination of statewide efforts is evolving into a national network that is increasingly well positioned to influence national priorities and better serve children and families.

The following states have statewide afterschool networks and are actively recruiting cities to serve as key partners (additional states may gain funded networks in the future): Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

In 2002, the Mott Foundation began supporting statewide afterschool networks and providing technical assistance to these networks through the Afterschool Technical Assistance Collaborative, composed of representatives from Afterschool Alliance, Council of Chief State School Officers, The Finance Project, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, and the College of Charleston Foundation, and with support from Learning Point Associates and Collaborative Communications Group.





Effective Partnerships between Cities and Statewide Afterschool Networks

The examples below demonstrate how many cities are working hand in hand with their statewide afterschool networks to improve afterschool opportunities for children and youth through joint policy and leadership efforts. In some cities, local elected officials serve as vocal champions for their networks to raise public awareness or to increase state funding for afterschool. In other communities, city staff members work with their networks on a regular basis to align city and state efforts and share each other's expertise. City-level afterschool efforts can often be so strong that networks share them with other cities to provide examples of models to replicate. Given the broad reach, influence, and expertise of the networks, cities benefit from the training and statewide spotlight that the networks shine on them. These partnerships take many shapes, but in all cases, efforts to improve afterschool opportunities have moved ahead further and faster as a result of collaboration. In addition to the examples of these partnerships below, more examples are located in an appendix at the end of this report.

JOINT EFFORTS TO INCREASE STATE FUNDING AND SUPPORT

The following cities have partnered with their statewide afterschool networks to increase funding for local afterschool initiatives.

Bridgeport, Connecticut

Working in tandem with the Connecticut Afterschool Network to secure additional state afterschool funding in 2006, former Bridgeport Mayor John Fabrizi provided testimony to the Connecticut General Assembly on why afterschool programs are critical to Bridgeport. The city supported the network's "ask," which helped pave the way for a state budget line item for \$4.5 million. Of these funds, \$500,000 went directly to the City of Bridgeport to support its local afterschool programs. In 2007, the city and network continued to lobby for increased state funding, and the city also submitted applications to compete for dollars on its own. That year, the city succeeded in receiving three \$150,000 state grants to fund programming and staffing in 10 schools.

Rochester, New York

In the summer of 2008, the superintendent of Rochester Public Schools and Mayor Robert Duffy created the Rochester After-School Task Force to develop a stronger system of services for the city's youth. The task force asked The After-School Corporation (TASC), a New York Statewide Afterschool Network (NYSAN) partner, to facilitate this process, and TASC in turn asked network staff to assist with these efforts. Building on a statewide analysis NYSAN had conducted and published around afterschool funding streams, the network conducted a Rochester-specific funding scan to collect information on all of the federal, state, county, and city funding options available to the municipality and region. This analysis included a look at both public and private funding options for Rochester programs. NYSAN staff presented these findings at a task force meeting and facilitated a discussion about how to access, coordinate, and maximize those resource pools. The task force used the findings to inform their citywide afterschool system-building efforts.

Spokane, Washington

In the 2007 legislative session, the Washington Afterschool Network led an effort to secure money from the state budget for out-of-school time learning for the first time. Working in partnership with the network, Spokane's mayor and city manager asked their state legislators to support the request. Due to these efforts, the state legislature allocated \$3 million to enhance the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants to middle and high school programs. Spokane received a grant for a collaborative venture between Campfire and Spokane Public Schools that their existing pool of 21st CCLC funds would not have been able to support. The city supported the request in its legislative agenda, and this new source of support could translate into additional funding for Spokane area programs in the future.



In addition to working together to increase state funding, cities and statewide afterschool networks can draw upon municipal leadership to propel a regional or state strategy for afterschool by sharing local successes that can be adapted across the state.

Denver, Colorado

The City of Denver has solidified its relationship with the Colorado Afterschool Network (CAN) by having senior staff from the Mayor's Office for Education and Children participate actively on CAN's Governance Council. When the Colorado network was first formed, it conducted regional focus groups to determine the state's afterschool needs, which included support for community-level capacity-building and collaboration.

The network immediately saw the importance of partnering with Denver, given the city's longstanding commitment to afterschool. The City of Denver and CAN surveyed more than 700 local afterschool providers to determine the range of program offerings, their locations, the young people they served, costs, training available to staff, and their challenges. CAN and city staff jointly created the survey and analyzed the data, and produced a report on providers' capacity, resources, use of evaluations and quality standards, and professional development needs. The report included detailed demographic data on Denver's youth and identified neighborhoods with the highest need for programming based on factors such as crime by and against youth, teen pregnancy, and poverty rates. This data was used to create a searchable citywide database of available afterschool opportunities that was placed prominently on the city's Web site. The mapping tool was launched at a high-profile event with Mayor John Hickenlooper and Denver Public Schools Superintendent Michael Bennet.

CAN plans to replicate the Denver provider survey and mapping process in other communities around the state. By working with the City of Denver on this initiative, CAN will be able to share the processes and tools that they learned with other city leaders. Denver's prominence as a political and media hub also provides CAN with unique opportunities to build public support and gain visibility.

St. Paul, Minnesota

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman joined Youth Community Connections, the Minnesota statewide afterschool network, at a 2008 national meeting of all of the statewide networks. During this meeting, Mayor Coleman spoke on a panel about the roles he has played to support afterschool in St. Paul and discussed strategies for how to engage policymakers. Mayor Coleman also presented information on how the city capitalized on public-private partnerships to provide transportation to and from out-of-school time opportunities using a "Circulator" bus. Over the past two years, the St. Paul "Circulator" has provided over 10,000 young riders access to community learning programs during the non-school hours in a few neighborhoods. The city is now considering moving toward a transportation system that will help young people access youth-serving institutions across the city. Youth Community Connections is working with the mayor's education director and Second Shift coordinator to help cities across the state replicate the "Circulator" bus model. Together the city and network are researching cost-effective models of public transportation that will increase access to afterschool programming and learning opportunities.

The City of St. Paul and Youth Community Connections have built a strong partnership in which the YCC executive director sits on St. Paul's Second Shift Commission, a group of 17 leaders who provide policy advice on youth and education issues. In turn, Mayor Coleman's education director is a partner in the YCC's Policy and Advocacy Workgroup. Recently, Mayor Coleman supported YCC's efforts to pass state legislation allocating \$5.3 million toward Afterschool Community Learning programs. Of these new funds, the City of St. Paul and its community partners received nearly \$1 million to support out-of-school time learning opportunities. Nearly \$500,000 went to support the city-led East Side Learning Collaborative.

For more information about how cities have partnered with their statewide afterschool networks to increase state funding and support or advance a statewide strategy for afterschool, please see the following city examples in the appendix: Chicago, Ill.; New York, N.Y.; and Providence, R.I.



SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY

One important role that statewide afterschool networks can play involves working with cities to develop common standards to evaluate local program quality. The networks can then collaborate with cities to enhance professional development and influence state licensing policies, which can lead to new funding streams for afterschool.

Chicago, Illinois

Since the Illinois After-School Partnership's inception, the network has supported distribution of program evaluation resources. In 2007, the partnership published the Evaluation Resource Guide, a comprehensive handbook for executive and program directors. In collaboration with the partnership, Chicago's Department of Child and Youth Services (DCYS) distributed the guide to staff at more than 280 program providers. DCYS and Chicago's Out-of-School Time (OST) Project sponsored a course on how to use the guide, as well as an introduction to program evaluation at the "Partners in Quality" professional development conference. Attendees included youth-serving staff in programs administered through Chicago's afterschool system. These efforts have provided a common language and understanding of how to evaluate sustainable quality improvement for programs in Chicago and throughout Illinois.

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Leaders from the City of Grand Rapids have been working for several years to create and strengthen their citywide afterschool system and developed significant expertise in this area. The city and the Michigan After School Partnership have worked together to address state licensing requirements that were obstacles for some programs and jointly crafted House Bill 5110, which aimed to amend the Child Care Licensing Act. The goal of this legislation was to remove regulatory barriers to the operation of before- and after-school programs while maintaining state oversight, and to distinguish between programs for children of elementary age and programs for older children. Without this distinction, programs for older youth were held to the same student-teacher ratio and facility requirements of programs for younger children. Passing this legislation enabled providers to develop more cost-effective programs tailored to the needs of their target populations, saving the Grand Rapids Public Schools over \$300,000.

Providence, Rhode Island

The Providence After School Alliance (PASA), an intermediary organization founded by Mayor David Cicilline, and the Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance (RIASPA) have forged a close working relationship. The executive directors of PASA and RIASPA serve on each other's boards, and staff from each organization have collaborated to create and disseminate quality afterschool standards for programs in Providence that can also be used in other cities across the state. PASA and RIASPA have jointly applied and been awarded funding for two grants, one national and one local, to support their joint quality improvement and capacity-building work. In addition, leaders from both organizations have worked in partnership over the past two years to provide the nationally-recognized Advancing Youth Development training to more than 200 youth workers and afterschool providers in Rhode Island.

Additionally, the two organizations are working to institute widespread use of the Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment Tool (RIPQA), which is based on the nationally-tested and validated Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) developed by the High/Scope Education Foundation. This joint work on standards and quality assessment has prompted the Rhode Island Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative as well as the United Way of Rhode Island to endorse the standards and require use of the RIPQA for the programs they fund.

For more information about how cities have partnered with their statewide afterschool networks to improve program quality, please see the following city examples in the appendix: Chicago, Ill.; Denver, Colo.; Florence, S.C.; Morgantown, W.Va.; New Brunswick, N.J.; New York, N.Y.; Portland, Ore.; Seattle, Wash.; Tucson, Ariz.; and Tulsa and Lawton, Okla.



HELP IN BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR AFTERSCHOOL

Statewide afterschool networks provide a platform for local elected officials to serve as champions of afterschool both in their cities and their states. These local champions are critical players in engaging mayors and municipal leaders in other cities and spearheading efforts to rally community support for the expansion of afterschool programs.

Eugene, Oregon

As a member of the state's Commission on Child Care as well as the Oregon Afterschool for Kids network, Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy has acted as a champion for afterschool in her community and other cities and towns in Oregon. At the request of the Oregon network, she authored a letter to all mayors across the state asking for their support of the national Afterschool Alliance's Afterschool for All campaign. This letter, along with a video of Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, will be used to develop "circles of friends" for afterschool in Oregon. Taking on a visible role for the network, Mayor Piercy gave the keynote address on afterschool at the network's Day at the Capitol in April 2007. Mayor Piercy has also been involved in discussions on exempting programs for school-age youth from some state child care regulations.

Florence, South Carolina

Florence Mayor Frank Willis created the Mayor's Coalition to Prevent Juvenile Crime in 2004 to address a flurry of youth violence. This coalition, which includes top leaders from the city, law enforcement, schools, hospitals, businesses, and community and faith-based organizations, created a citywide afterschool system that targets high-need areas and improves the quality of programs. Focusing on both elementary school children and older youth, including teens at risk of dropping out of school, the coalition created three teen centers, credit recovery programs, and partnerships with local businesses to provide jobs for youth. As a result, the city has seen a 75 percent reduction in juvenile felonies, a 45 percent decrease in referrals to the juvenile justice system, and an 11 percent increase in promotion rates from ninth to tenth grade. These gains have grabbed the attention of state judges and resulted in the allocation of state juvenile justice funds to support the expansion of the teen centers and afterschool workforce development programs.

The city partnered with the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance to share its expertise in building a citywide system with other communities across the state. In 2007, the City of Florence, with support from the alliance, held a nine-county summit of city leaders to educate neighboring communities about the coalition's accomplishments. The goal of this summit was to encourage other community leaders to expand the afterschool opportunities available in that region. Additionally, the alliance held a high-profile Lights on Afterschool event in 2007 in Columbia, S.C., and presented Mayor Willis with a leadership award for his efforts to collaborate with school and community leaders. The alliance is considering holding a statewide mayors' summit to engage additional mayors interested in following the lead of Florence and developing local afterschool initiatives.

For more information about how cities have partnered with their statewide afterschool networks to build public support for afterschool, please see the following city examples in the appendix: Bridgeport, Conn.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Little Rock, Ark.; Muskogee, Okla.; Providence, R.I.; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Spokane, Wash.

A MECHANISM TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Participation in statewide afterschool networks connects cities with other stakeholders interested in supporting local afterschool programs, and facilitates stronger partnerships that advance system-building efforts.

Atlanta, Georgia

Through its strong relationship with the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta (UWMA), the Georgia Afterschool Investment Council (GAIC) participated in site visits to Atlanta's afterschool programs and met key community leaders such as Kent C. "Oz" Nelson, the former CEO of UPS, in the spring of 2007. Nelson led other influential community leaders and GAIC to meet with Mayor Shirley Franklin and Atlanta Public Schools Superintendent



Beverly Hall to discuss the idea of a citywide afterschool effort. Building on early discussions with UWMA, Nelson, leaders from IBM, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, GAIC developed a 2007 Lights On Afterschool event.

The 2007 Lights On event held in Atlanta brought the school system, local and state elected officials, and private funders together to focus on afterschool. More than 500 middle school students, parents, providers, and special guests attended. The event helped the GAIC raise awareness of the state of afterschool in Atlanta. Mayor Franklin voiced support for afterschool in her remarks, and other speakers called for an end to budget cuts for afterschool, highlighted the alignment between afterschool and Atlanta Public Schools' mission, and urged the community to work together.

This high-profile event led to several positive outcomes. The Atlanta After-School All-Stars Advisory Board, which includes representatives of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, UWMA, Atlanta Public Schools (APS), the Georgia Department of Education, and GAIC, will expand efforts to ensure that all middle school students have the option to participate in After-School All-Stars. Since the October 2007 event, the All-Stars model has expanded to two additional schools in APS and another school in the metropolitan region. In addition, key United Way leaders are exploring the feasibility of ensuring that middle school children across the metropolitan area have a high-quality afterschool experience. GAIC will serve as content experts, and continue to catalyze support among community and business leaders.

Omaha, Nebraska

The City of Omaha's Middle School Learning Center initiative, overseen by an advisory board that includes city and school district officials, began with a pilot program for school-based, community organization-led afterschool programs targeting middle school students. The partnership was supported by a \$1.9 million grant that the mayor's office received from the U.S. Department of Justice in late 2006 to support afterschool programming for at-risk youth and to create an afterschool network, which is now called the Omaha Afterschool Alliance.

To support this effort, the Nebraska Community Learning Center Network helped broker a relationship between the city and the Omaha-based Sherwood Foundation, which is now a financial supporter of the program. The foundation partnered with Mayor Mike Fahey's office on the development of the initiative's request for proposals, provided funding, and reached out to other partners to build support. This relationship opened many doors, and led to the elimination of barriers to using school building facilities during non-school hours.

Because the Nebraska statewide network works to strengthen local afterschool initiatives across the state, the network invited the Omaha Afterschool Alliance director to join them at the January 2007 national meeting of statewide afterschool networks to discuss emerging opportunities in Omaha. The network has also become involved in Omaha's Building Bright Futures initiative to improve the quality of life for the city's most vulnerable youth. By taking an active role on the initiative's Task Force on Afterschool, Mentoring and Tutoring, the network has worked closely with the Sherwood Foundation, the mayor's office, Omaha Public Schools, community-based service providers, and other key stakeholders to develop more high-quality afterschool programs. Staff from the mayor's office and the Sherwood Foundation now serve on the network's leadership committee.

For more information about how cities have partnered with their statewide afterschool networks to strengthen local partnerships, please see the following city examples in the appendix: Salem, Ore.; and Tampa, Fla.





Strategies for City Engagement with Statewide Afterschool Networks

The examples above demonstrate the importance of strong leadership and the development of partnerships. Mayors, councilmembers, and senior municipal staff can enhance afterschool programs in their communities and throughout their states by strengthening the efforts of statewide afterschool networks. The list below summarizes action steps that city leaders can take when partnering with their networks, as well as steps for networks to consider when seeking to engage local leaders in their efforts.

ACTION STEPS FOR MUNICIPAL LEADERS

To increase public engagement and awareness about the need for afterschool in cities and states, municipal officials can:

- Use the bully pulpit to attract more attention and support within their communities.
- Incorporate afterschool initiatives into State of the City addresses.
- Make support for young people through afterschool opportunities a key part of their agendas and assign staff to lead the initiative.
- Create, lead, or support a community-wide task force to determine needs and address gaps in afterschool opportunities.
- Convene visible afterschool stakeholders (police chief, business community, school superintendent, universities, faith-based leaders, and afterschool providers) to create a local action plan addressing afterschool needs.
- Host a public event during the national Lights On Afterschool celebration (held annually in October) to raise public awareness about the importance of afterschool programs, recognize program leaders, engage other local stakeholders, and garner media attention for the city's commitment to afterschool.

To educate and build support among state legislators, municipal officials can:

- Use their leadership and influence to communicate the importance of afterschool programs in their communities to state officials.
- Gather data about how lack of access to afterschool programs impacts children and families in their cities and provide this information to state legislators.
- Work with municipal officials in other cities to highlight the need for state resources to support local afterschool investments.

To leverage additional state dollars and influence state policy, municipal leaders can:

- Partner with community foundations, local philanthropies, and businesses to raise private funds for afterschool programs and ask the state to match this funding.
- Participate in their statewide afterschool networks to gain greater access to information and build relationships with state agencies.
- Connect with fellow mayors and councilmembers in neighboring cities and towns or in other municipalities across their states to galvanize support for afterschool.
- Coordinate advocacy efforts and funding requests with networks and join a larger group of constituents in discussing local afterschool needs with state officials.
- Provide testimony at state legislative hearings on the need for increased statewide funding allocations that can support city efforts.
- Explain to state legislators how certain state policies limit the ability of local governments and schools to offer afterschool programs.



To ensure the municipal voice is included in their statewide networks' agendas, municipal officials can:

- Serve on the network's governance or advisory board.
- Sign up as partners and receive emails, alerts, and meeting announcements.
- Form a coalition with local elected officials from neighboring cities and towns that are facing the same afterschool shortages and share those challenges with the network.

ACTION STEPS FOR STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORKS

To highlight and showcase local best practices and leadership across the state, networks can:

- Serve as an information hub by collecting and disseminating lessons, strategies, and ideas from communities displaying strong municipal leadership.
- Provide city efforts with visibility through the networks' wide-reaching listservs, statewide meetings, and partnerships.

ACTION STEPS FOR BOTH MUNICIPAL AND NETWORK LEADERS

To advance local and statewide efforts, cities and networks can:

- Share resources and tools to help other cities avoid "reinventing the wheel." Cities and networks can determine if locally-developed tools, products, and trainings can be replicated statewide.
- Leverage their relationships with key local and state partners, including state agencies, foundations, and other champions for afterschool.
- Partner on data collection efforts. Networks administer large-scale surveys and conduct data analysis to understand their state's afterschool landscape, and they can help communities conduct their own data collection effort. Cities can share their findings to help the networks understand local needs across the state.
- Develop statewide standards for program quality and participation to help make the case for increases in funding and more supportive policies.
- Work together to determine cost-savings as a result of policy changes. Cities can experience significant savings through joint use of facilities, licensed staff-child ratio requirements, and blending of state and federal funding streams when state policies allow greater flexibility at the local level.
- Partner to improve program quality through network trainings, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities that share locally developed standards from other cities across the state.

CONTACT YOUR STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

States not listed below did not have a statewide afterschool network funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation at the time of publication. However, independent efforts may exist in those states. City leaders are encouraged to connect with statewide afterschool organizations and other municipalities to begin discussions regarding the formation of a statewide afterschool network. For more information about the statewide afterschool networks, visit www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net.

The following states have networks funded by the Mott Foundation:

Arizona Out-of-School Time Network – www.azafterschool.org

Arkansas Out-of-School Network – www.aosn.org

California Afterschool Network – www.afterschoolnetwork.org

Colorado AfterSchool Network – www.coloradoafterschoolnetwork.org

Connecticut After School Network – <http://ctafterschoolnetwork.org>

Delaware AfterSchool Alliance – www.familyandworkplace.org/providers/deasalliance.asp

Florida Afterschool Network – www.myfan.org

Georgia Afterschool Investment Council – www.afterschoolga.org



Illinois After-School Partnership and Illinois After-School Alliance – www.illinoisafterschool.net
Indiana Afterschool Network – www.inafterschoolnetwork.com
Iowa Afterschool Alliance – www.state.ia.us/government/dhr/iasa
Kansas Enrichment Network – www2.ku.edu/~ken
Maine Afterschool Network – www.maineafterschool.net/ASN
Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership – www.massafterschool.org
Michigan After-School Partnership – www.miafterschool.org
Minnesota Youth Community Connections – www.youthcommunityconnections.org
Missouri Afterschool State Network – www.moasn.org
Montana Afterschool Network – www.mtafterschool.com
Nebraska Community Learning Center Network – www.nebraskaclcnetwork.org
Nevada Afterschool Network – www.communitychestnevada.net/nan.php
PlusTime New Hampshire – www.plustime.org
New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network – www.nmforumforyouth.org
New Jersey Afterschool Network – www.njsacc.org
New York State Afterschool Network – www.nysan.org
North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs – www.nccap.net
Ohio Afterschool Network – www.ohioafterschoolnetwork.org
Oklahoma Afterschool Network – www.okafterschool.org
Oregon After School for Kids – www.oregonask.org
Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool Youth Development Network – www.psaydn.org
Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance – www.afterschoolri.org
South Carolina Afterschool Alliance – www.scafterschool.com
Utah Afterschool Network – www.utahafterschool.org
Washington Afterschool Network – <http://schoolsoutwashington.org>
West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network – www.ext.wvu.edu/cyfar
Wisconsin Afterschool Network – <http://dpi.state.wi.us/sspw/wan.html>
Wyoming Afterschool Alliance – <http://www.wyafterschoolalliance.org>

For assistance in connecting with your statewide network coordinator, contact Bela Shah at NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families at (202) 626-3057 or shah@nlc.org.





Appendix

Bridgeport, Connecticut

The City of Bridgeport has a 15-year history of running and funding the Lighthouse afterschool program at many public school sites. In an effort to create a systemic, citywide approach to afterschool, the city's Lighthouse program director and former Mayor John Fabrizi convened stakeholders to develop a unified vision for afterschool. In Mayor Bill Finch's new administration, the city has continued to make afterschool a priority under the sustained leadership of the Lighthouse program director. The city plays an active role with the Connecticut Afterschool Network to share its lessons on afterschool investment and city-school partnerships with other cities in Connecticut.

The Connecticut Afterschool Network has been working with nine regional afterschool alliances around the state, each of which works closely with city government: Bridgeport, Danbury, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Norwalk, Stamford, Waterbury, and Willimantic. The network provides statewide trainings to afterschool providers in these cities and connects local leaders to research, curricula, and best practices.

Chicago, Illinois

The City of Chicago maintains a close relationship with the Illinois After-School Partnership and the Illinois After-School Alliance (which comprise the Mott Foundation-funded Afterschool Network in Illinois), serving as a source of information and support for the partnership and alliance, while also benefiting from their research, resources, and expertise. The city worked with the alliance to pass House Resolution 384, a bill to create a statewide Afterschool Funding Policy Task Force. Several city leaders in education and youth development participated in the task force, including the commissioner of Chicago's Department of Children and Youth Services. This task force, which was convened by the partnership, developed recommendations to lay the groundwork for a dedicated funding stream for afterschool in the form of a line item in the state board of education's budget.

City leaders have collaborated with the Illinois After-School Partnership on the release of the Illinois After-School Finance Plan. In support of these activities, the partnership is collaborating with Chicago's Out-of-School Time Project to conduct a series of stakeholder focus groups to better understand public opinion toward afterschool in Chicago and across Illinois. The focus group findings will help drive a strategic communications plan that will advance advocacy for state funding.

The task force also makes state policy recommendations for quality improvement and professional development, which has been a high priority of the city and Illinois After-School Partnership. State and city leaders have held key leadership roles in expanding the statewide credentialing and professional development system already in place for early childhood practitioners to support afterschool and youth development workforce staff, culminating in the Illinois School-Age and Youth Development (I-SAY) credential. Illinois was one of eight states selected by the National Collaboration for Youth and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time to participate in the Career Pathways Project. The initiative is closely aligned with the broader efforts of the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition to strengthen the youth-serving workforce.

Denver, Colorado

Seven years ago, the Denver Mayor's Office for Education and Children, Denver Public Schools, Mile High United Way, and more than 30 local afterschool providers established the Denver Quality Afterschool Coalition (DQUAC), which is an informal network that meets monthly to share training and information on issues of afterschool program quality. In 2007 and 2008, DQUAC pooled resources, staff, and expertise to create a free joint summer program for more than 200 children. The Colorado Afterschool Network (CAN) is a partner in DQUAC and both provides information to local providers and learns from their efforts. In addition, Denver provides free professional development workshops for afterschool providers, and CAN developed an online professional development program for front-line youth service providers, with curricula ranging from positive youth development to cultural competency.



Florence, South Carolina

The South Carolina Afterschool Alliance has provided information on afterschool quality standards to the Florence Mayor's Coalition to Prevent Juvenile Crime. The alliance has also connected the coalition with funding and provider training opportunities, and explained the network's state policy efforts to increase the quality of and access to programs. The city is now an active member of the alliance, and the mayor-appointed coalition director serves on the alliance's Quality Sub-Committee, which is working to develop statewide afterschool standards tied to funding incentives for programs. The network has also helped the city make connections with the state's Education Oversight Committee (EOC), a body that liaises with the House, Senate, and governor's office and can advocate for policy changes and funding. The EOC is now aware of successful initiatives in Florence that may be considered for future funds. In 2007, the alliance received \$250,000 from the EOC to provide professional development, training, and technical assistance in the Pee Dee County area, which includes Florence.

Grand Rapids, Michigan

The City of Grand Rapids helped launch the Michigan After-School Partnership after a 2003 state resolution requested that the Michigan Departments of Education and Human Services convene a task force to form the Michigan After-School Initiative. The Grand Rapids Mayor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families played a key role in the evolution of the initiative's structure, by-laws, budget, and policies, and produced a report to the Michigan Legislature that led to the formation of the Michigan After-School Partnership (MASP). Since the network was formed, the director of the Office for Children, Youth, and Families (now Our Community's Children) has served as chair for two years.

In addition, Mayor George Heartwell chairs the Urban Core of Mayors, a group of 13 mayors from urban areas in Michigan, and has used this group as a vehicle to share information about Grand Rapids' afterschool efforts. As a result, several mayors have brought visibility to afterschool programs in their public speeches and State of the City addresses.

Indianapolis, Indiana

The Indiana Afterschool Network (IAN) was funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and other local philanthropies as a formal network in 2007. However, the network has operated informally for more than seven years. The Afterschool Coalition of Indianapolis (ACI) joined and helped sustain this network under the leadership of former Mayor Bart Peterson. When Mayor Peterson launched his afterschool initiative in 2001, he appointed a cabinet-level afterschool program coordinator, who co-chaired the coalition with United Way. Over a seven-year period, ACI developed into a local coalition of more than 40 afterschool providers, representing over 126 full-time afterschool programs in Indianapolis.

ACI and the Indiana Afterschool Network have united afterschool providers across the city and state to focus on funding, sustainability, public awareness, quality standards, evaluation, training, and staff development. Local leaders from Evansville, Michigan City, and other communities receiving 21st CCLC grants have also been part of the network. The Indiana Afterschool Network officially opened in October 2007, and is working on statewide policy development for afterschool programs, raising awareness and support, and disseminating best practices on afterschool program quality. ACI recently converted from a government-sponsored initiative to a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization housed at the Indiana Association of United Ways and the Indiana Afterschool Network.

Little Rock, Arkansas

Working with the Arkansas Afterschool Network has given statewide publicity and recognition to the City of Little Rock's afterschool programs and the elected officials who support them. Little Rock, which played an instrumental role in creating the network, has become an example for other leaders in Arkansas and other states, adding legitimacy to the city's efforts and helping keep local elected officials engaged. Former Mayor Jim Dailey spoke at the Governor's Summit on Extra Learning Opportunities in 2006, and current Mayor Mark Stodola spoke at a 2008 Governor's Summit on After School. In addition, a former city staff person who serves as the network's vice chair was appointed by Governor Mike Beebe to be a member of the Governor's Task Force on Best Practices for After-School and Summer Educational Programs. Network staff have provided the city with expertise, information, and research that



has helped make the case for afterschool support to local elected officials, school board members, local businesses, and business associations.

Morgantown, West Virginia

Morgantown Mayor Ron Justice declared 2008 the “Year of the Child” and together with Councilmember Jenny Selin formed the Mayor’s Task Force on Child Care and Out-Of School Time. The City of Morgantown has also worked closely with school district and community leaders to create a plan to develop a citywide afterschool network. The task force has identified a number of issues requiring action at the state level, including the need for quality afterschool program standards. Morgantown leaders share their efforts with the West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network (WVSAN) Steering Committee and listserv, and WVSAN provides information and training to assist Morgantown’s citywide system-building process.

Muskogee, Oklahoma

In April 2008, an Oklahoma Governor’s Summit on Expanded Learning Opportunities featured mayors who have been engaged in supporting out-of-school time programs. The Oklahoma Afterschool Network worked with Governor Brad Henry to create the summit agenda, which highlighted out-of-school time learning opportunities in Muskogee, Lawton, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Tahlequah, and Norman. For example, the summit focused on a longstanding partnership between the City of Muskogee and the Muskogee School District, which led to the creation of city-funded school-age care coordinator and youth volunteer coordinator positions. The school district provides the space to operate programs, as well as transportation for children and youth and technical support for the coordinators. The two programs work together to ensure seamless delivery of services as the elementary school children “age up” into the volunteer corps. Muskogee’s city-school partnership is now in its 14th year and serves more than 700 children annually.

New Brunswick, New Jersey

Under Mayor James Cahill’s leadership, the City of New Brunswick provides funds to a free citywide afterschool program for 800 children in grades one through eight. The New Jersey School-Age Care Consortium (NJSACC) has partnered with the program’s leaders to offer new opportunities for youth, including financial literacy classes and obesity prevention. NJSACC’s technical assistance has been critical in improving program quality by providing guidance on compliance with national quality standards, special grants for training, and advice on professional development issues. NJSACC and the city have also collaborated with the Rutgers Gardens, a 50-acre outdoor classroom at Rutgers University, to develop a program that combines gardening and environmental awareness.

New York, New York

In 2008, the New York Statewide Afterschool Network (NYSAN) recommended revisions to the state’s School Age Child Care regulations, which is administered by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. These regulations outline licensing requirements for all programs serving more than seven children who are between the ages of six (or enrolled in kindergarten) and 13. State and local monitoring agencies use these regulations to inspect school-age child care programs in the areas of health, safety, and quality. However, some of the regulations have long been viewed as confusing and counterproductive.

Members of the NYSAN Policy Committee knew of a New York City workgroup convened by Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s director of out-of-school time that had sought to influence these regulations in early 2008. NYSAN reached out to that group, which represents the mayor’s office and New York City Department of Health and Mental Health, to work on a new set of recommended revisions. In the process, the network and city forged a consensus on regulatory language that met both unique city concerns and statewide needs. As of October 2008, the recommendations were nearing completion, and will be submitted by NYSAN to Governor David Paterson’s office with the intention of including it as part of his annual Program Bill, one piece of the governor’s proposed legislative package. New York City partners are signing on to these recommendations, and making them a priority in their own state advocacy efforts.



In addition, several NYSAN partner organizations provide professional development for afterschool providers, but the network identified a gap in serving the many grant and contract managers of public afterschool funding streams. As a result, NYSAN launched the “Quality Comes First” Professional Development Institute, a two-year long continuum of cross-agency learning and networking that serves over 50 program managers who collectively oversee several hundred programs. The network invited staff from four agencies to participate, with the majority coming from the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and Department of Education (DOE). Feedback from department leadership and participants has been overwhelmingly positive. NYSAN’s ability to engage national experts – from within NYSAN member organizations and elsewhere – to lead workshops and provide training with a statewide context was a significant benefit to DYCD staff. In addition, program managers report high satisfaction with opportunities to learn and share best practices with colleagues from different local and state agencies.

Portland, Oregon

The City of Portland’s voter-approved Children’s Investment Fund provides more than \$10 million per year for programs that ensure children arrive at school ready to learn, provide safe and constructive afterschool programs, and prevent child abuse and neglect and family violence. The fund has made an annual investment of \$3.7 million in 30 afterschool programs. More than 75 percent of students attending an afterschool or mentoring program supported by this fund during the 2005-06 school year met or exceeded state benchmarks in reading and math, and 74 percent attended school at least 90 percent of the time. These figures include students in four school districts across the city. Sixty-four percent of Portland Public Schools students participating in these programs who were suspended or expelled the previous year received fewer or no referrals resulting in suspensions or expulsions during the 2005-06 school year. Given these positive results, Oregon After School for Kids is discussing program parameters and elements of quality with Children’s Investment Fund leaders with the hope of aligning programs supported by the Fund with a common set of quality standards.

The City of Portland is also a major partner and funder of the SUN Service System collaboration, a multi-jurisdictional partnership of the city, county, service providers, and community-based organizations that pools resources to offer school-based human and social services and afterschool programs. Oregon After School for Kids is an official partner of the collaboration and provides resources, training, and visibility across the state to this effort.

Providence, Rhode Island

The director of planning and implementation of the Providence After School Alliance (PASA) and the director of the Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance (RIASPA) testified together at a House Finance Committee hearing to advocate for including afterschool programs in a bill to create an education aid formula for Rhode Island. Currently, Rhode Island is the only state in the nation without a state education formula, which means that, given the large number of low-income students in Providence, the city is heavily under-funded. City and network leaders have used afterschool as a point of entry for ensuring their voices were heard in these discussions. Mayor David Cicilline has played a key role in securing the participation of the House majority leader in RIASPA’s Supporting Student Success initiative, an effort to get the governor, state legislators, and the state education agency to work together on advancing afterschool efforts.

In addition, Mayor Cicilline has worked with RIASPA to share the PASA model with cities and towns throughout Rhode Island and across the nation. This statewide strategy mobilizes schools, nonprofits, recreation centers, libraries, and museums to develop streamlined schedules tailored to youth needs. RIASPA sponsored a mayoral breakfast hosted by Mayor Cicilline and Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian at Warwick City Hall to discuss the impact of their afterschool investments and partnerships with over a dozen other Rhode Island mayors, who learned how they can partner with the network and how RIASPA and PASA can be resources to city-led initiatives.



Salem, Oregon

Staff from the Salem Neighborhood and Community Services Department participate on the executive team of Oregon After School for Kids, providing expertise and knowledge about county and city government as the network develops outreach plans. In addition, the City of Salem works with the Salem-Keizer School District to manage the POWER afterschool programs in 12 middle schools. City staff are also involved in the development of regional Youth Development Networks, which will provide feedback to the network steering committee on professional development, local issues, and sharing of resources.

Salt Lake City, Utah

Municipal staff from Salt Lake City's Youth Programs Division were approached early on to participate in the formation of the Utah Afterschool Network largely because of the leadership of former Mayor Rocky Anderson and the strong relationships between the city, county, and various funders. In addition, Mayor Anderson had already created a high level of public awareness locally, so the network did not have to struggle to educate other partners on the issue. Funded as a formal network in 2006, the network's first step was to host a statewide gathering in Salt Lake City of program providers, opinion leaders, and academic experts. The goal was to set a course of action leading to the formation of a three-year strategic plan for the network. The city's youth program director became board chair of the network, establishing stronger linkages with the city.

Mayor Anderson also worked with the Utah Afterschool Network to engage his city councilmembers in efforts to develop a citywide afterschool system. Mayor Anderson's announcement in 2007 that he was not seeking reelection presented a critical time to ensure that all mayoral candidates would continue the city's longstanding commitment to afterschool. City and school staff, community advocates, and state network leaders spent time educating all city councilmembers and mayoral candidates about the importance of afterschool and the impact of the existing investment in programs across the city. This heightened awareness and buy-in has also kept the public engaged in supporting afterschool programs.

Under current Mayor Ralph Becker's leadership, the city is conducting an assessment of youth, their parents, and the schools to target afterschool programs to underserved areas. The city has also strengthened its relationship with the school district and continues to work in collaboration with the network to improve the city's afterschool programming.

Seattle, Washington

School's Out Washington (SOWA), which serves as the lead agency for the Washington Afterschool Network, has worked closely with the City of Seattle on developing academic outcome language for programs receiving Families and Education Levy dollars. The levy is a special, seven-year property tax passed in 1997 and renewed in 2004, which supports positive child and youth development programs in Seattle. SOWA provides on-site technical assistance to the sites selected to receive this funding, and offers training on how to support math, literacy, and family engagement to all programs run by the City of Seattle.

Spokane, Washington

The Washington Afterschool Network's Panel of 50, a group of key community and state leaders for afterschool, includes Spokane Mayor Mary Verner, the city's regional youth coordinator, the Spokane County sheriff, Spokane police chief, superintendent of Spokane Public Schools, and the Governor's Eastern Washington representative. At the 2007 Lights On Afterschool celebration, the network honored former Spokane Mayor Dennis Hession for his leadership on afterschool. While in office, Mayor Hession worked to launch an afterschool sustainability initiative, and Mayor Verner has agreed to move this initiative forward. The city is leading a dialogue with community stakeholders about the development of a citywide youth development system.



The City of Spokane and Washington Afterschool Network are both focused on expanding partnerships with schools and community-based organizations as a strategy for sustaining afterschool programs. Recently, the Chase Youth Commission and Communities in Schools of Spokane County worked on a collaborative proposal to the network for three mini-forums to educate principals on this topic. These mini-summits were instrumental in spawning new school-community partnerships to support student achievement.

Tampa, Florida

For the 2008 Lights On Afterschool Day, the City of Tampa and Florida Afterschool Network (FAN) worked with state leaders and the cable channel Bright House Networks to produce the documentary "After the School Bell Rings," featuring local and national experts. Afterschool Alliance executive director Jodi Grant participated in the Lights On event hosted at a local school by the city, FAN, and school district. The City of Tampa and its partners have worked with FAN to develop the Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs and the accompanying self-assessment tools that are currently being completed.

Tucson, Arizona

In January 2008, the Tucson City Council created the Out-of-School Programs Task Force to review and evaluate the existing Tucson Out-of-School Program and research the viability of aligning in-school curricula with out-of-school learning activities. The Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence has provided the task force with research and informational resources, including afterschool quality standards, assessments and evaluations, and strategies for building school-community partnerships. The City of Tucson is currently reviewing proposals for a qualitative evaluation to assess the program and identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for future progress.

Tulsa and Lawton, Oklahoma

In 2006, the Oklahoma Afterschool Network was able to send Lawton Mayor John Purcell and city leaders from Edmond and Alva to NLC's National City Afterschool Summit, which helped both city leaders and the Oklahoma Municipal League stay connected to the network. Since then, the network and Oklahoma Municipal League have sponsored sessions on out-of-school time and youth development at the League's annual conference for two consecutive years. A 2007 session on gang prevention organized by the network featured Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor's gang prevention strategies, which include an out-of-school time focus.



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